

SAF/LLZ (Legislative Research Team)

THORNBERRY, William M. "Mac" (Republican)  
Representative, 13th District, Texas  
Elected 1994 to the 104th Congress  
Reelected to succeeding Congresses



#### BACKGROUND

Born: Clarendon, Texas - 15 July 1958

Home: Clarendon, Texas

Marital Status: Married (Sally) - 2 children

Religion: Presbyterian

Education: Texas Technical Univ, BA, 1980; Univ of Texas, JD, 1983

Military: None

Profession: Rancher, lawyer

Political: Legislative Counsel for Rep Tom Loeffler, 1983-85; Chief of Staff to Rep Larry Combest (R-TX), 1985-88. Defeated incumbent Rep Bill Sarpalius (D) in the 1994 general election with 56% of the vote. Reelected in 2000 with 68% of the vote and in 2002 with 79%.

Rep Thornberry, who supported all the provisions of the Contract With America, is a low-key conservative. His major goals have been to cut spending and reduce federal regulations, particularly environmental regulations. Supported the BRAC recommendations, but was concerned that closing Reese AFB would result in a capacity shortage to train pilots.

In 105th Congress, introduced bill to establish new DoD unified command called Joint Forces Command. At beginning of 106th Congress was assigned to the House Budget Committee and was appointed to serve on investigative subcmtes on Ethics Cmte. Introduced H.R. 1067, the Uniformed Services Retiree and Dependents Health Care Availability Act, to improve access to military treatment facilities for military retirees over 65 and their dependents. Sponsored provision in FY00 Def Auth requiring SecDef to conduct a study into US military space policy in the future. Said that with only 9 percent of the Air Force's budget being allocated toward space, it is critical that we move more aggressively to more formally incorporate military policy in space with other aspects of national security. In Oct99 Named Chairman of Special Oversight Panel on Dept of Energy Reorganization to work with the Administration on the timely and effective implementation of the DoE proposals mandated by the FY00 National Defense Auth Act. (HASC News Release, 5Oct99)

In the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, supported the establishment of a separate space force and was the primary House author of legislation to establish the Space Commission. Introduced the bill (HR 4660) to create the Department of Homeland Security, which was initially opposed by the White House. Supports restructuring the military. Said we need to overcome the obstacles to military transformation, e.g., bureaucratic self-interests, armed service tradition, and congressional resistance. Supported study on the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator (RNET), saying that our enemies will just bury their most valuable facilities.

Additional: Thornberrys have been cattle ranchers/farmers in this part of Texas for five generations. Worked in the State Dept as a deputy asst secretary for legislative affairs, 1988. Member, Air Power Caucus; Received the Legislative Vanguard Award from the NCO Assoc of America, 2000

AF Bases: Sheppard AFB

#### COMMITTEES

ARMED SERVICES -- Subcs on Terrorism; Strategic Forces

BUDGET